

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5260

INFO DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7933

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, IT

SUBJECT: DIFFICULTIES WITHIN COALITION ON GOVERNMENT-UNION
NEGOTIATIONS

1. CONCLUSIVE GOVERNMENT-UNION MEETING SCHEDULED FOR AFTERNOON JUNE 7 HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL NEXT WEEK. REASON FOR POSTPONEMENT IS APPARENT FAILURE OF DC-PSDI-PSI COALITION PARTNERS TO REACH AGREEMENT AT MORNING INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETING ON FINAL GOVERNMENT OFFER IN RESPONSE TO UNION DEMANDS. INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETING INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER RUMOR AND MINISTERS EMILIO COLOMBO, GIOLITTI, TANASSI, BERTOLDI, MANCINI, DE MITA AND GULLOTTI IS SCHEDULED TO RESUME THIS EVENING. ASKED BY JOURNALISTS FOR PROSPECTS FOR COALITION ACCORD ON ISSUE, FINANCE MINISTER TANASSI (PSKI) REPLIED THAT "FACT THAT WE ARE MEETING AGAIN MEANS THAT WE EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO REACH AN ACCORD."

2. CISL SECRETARIAT MEMBER TOLD EMBOFF THAT COALITION MEETING LIKELY TO CONTINUE TOMORROW AND THAT GOVERNMENT MEETING WITH UNIONS LIKELY TO TAKE PLACE NEXT WEEK "IF CRISIS DOES NOT OCCUR." SOURCE TERMED CRISIS "QUUE POSSIBLE", ALTHOUGH HE ADDED THAT UNIONS WOULD HOPE GOVERNMENT WOULD STAY IN PLACE SO THEY WOULD HAVE SOMEONE TO NEGOTIATE WITH.

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3. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH CISL SOURCE THAT FAILURE TO AGREE COULD LEAD TO CRISIS, BUT WE WELL AWARE THAT ALL PARTIES PREFER TO AVOID UNHELPFUL CRISIS AT THIS STAGE. DIFFICULTIES WITHIN COALITION FIND THEIR SOURCE IN BASIC CONFLICT BETWEEN TOUGH LINE SOCIALISTS HAVE BEEN TAKING IN SUPPORT OF UNION DEMANDS, AND AUSTERITY MEASURES SUPPORTED BY THE DC HARD PSI LINE REFLECTS SOCIALIST POLITICAL NEED, BUT SOCIALISTS ARE WHIPSAWED BETWEEN DESIRE TO AVOID ROCKING THE BOAT AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER THE SARDINIAN ELECTIONS AND UNWILLINGNESS TO APPEAR HESITANT IN BACKING "WORKING CLASS" INTERESTS AS INTERPRETED BY UNIONS. BEAUDRY

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